Primitiæ Regiminis Davidici.

OR,

THE FIRST-FRUITS OF DAVIDS *GOVERNMENT*,

Vowed to God before, and *offered* at his actual admission thereunto.

REPRESENTED

In a Sermon at the Assises held at *Reading*, for the County of *Berks*, *Feb.* 28. 1653.

By *Simon Ford*, B. D. and Pastour of the Congregation at St. *Laurence* Church in the said Town.

Published

At the joint desire of the High Sheriff, and Justices of Peace for the said County, which (with some mis reports since blown about concerning it, and the Author) inclined him to give way thereunto.

LONDON,

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TO
THE HONOURABLE,

Judge *Atkins*, one of the Juſtices of the *Common-Pleas*; as alſo to the right Worſhipfull *William Lackhouſe* of *Swallowfield*, Eſq. High Sheriffe of the County of *Berks*; together with the right Worſhipfull, the Gentry, both of and out of the Commiſſion for the Peace of the ſaid County; and principally to thoſe, at whoſe requeſt this Sermon was made publique.

My Lord, and Gentlemen,

THis *Sermon having adventured it ſelf upon the hazardous Tryal of* God and the Bench, *was adjudged to the* Preſs, *when its Author was not by to plead on his own behalf; who ſurely had he been privy to the Judgement,*

(which was onely reported to him by some few of the number) would have intreated the Gentlemen not to adventure the reputation of their discretions upon a piece too unworthy the notice of such an Honourable Judicature.

I confesse I looke upon the comming under the Stationers Presse, in these dayes, as a punishment to a Sermon, no lesse (in its kind) then that of the same denomination, which you in some cases inflict upon offendors; seeing it is thereby exposed to the weight of publique calumnies and reproaches, of which I am sure mine shall not want its sufficient load.

The onely remedy I have herein, is once more to present its case before you its Judges, (which I doe in this Dedication) and to intreat you that the Grand-Inquest you impannell to enquire concerning it, may be so wise as to understand the evidence of Truth that is in it; and so honest, as not to returne an Ignoramus, for Billa vera.

Surely, (My Lord, and Gentlemen) you that are sufficiently acquainted with the Yerburies, Chillendens, Ives's, and others of an inferiour Order, whom it would be too much

much honor to name, Seeds-men of the Devil, with whom this poore Town hath beene perpetually pestered and poysoned, will, I doubt not, see cause for that tartnesse of application in the close, for which I have been sufficiently persecuted by the tongues of those, who found their backs too tender to be rubbed.

Those mens names, and some of the Errors and Heresies they vented, I represented to your last Grand-Jury, and hoped they also would have seen cause either to have reported them to your Lordship, and the Bench, or at least not to have mis-reported me, (as some of them did) to others, as unable to justifie my charge.

My Lord, and Gentlemen, *I commit the Vindication of my name, and of this Truth, first, to God, who (I am sufficiently assured) will* bring forth its righteousnes as the light; *and (among men) to your wiser, and more impartiall judgements, hoping that you will (as farre as it concernes you) impresse the substance of it upon your Consciences, and walkings. And I pray that that Edition may be* correctior & emendatior, *more perfect then the Originall Copy it self: that you may* live *Sermons better then I can* Preach

or print them. And upon that account, I will preach and print as often as you please; upon other terms I care not how seldome. And this, because I am

Reading,

May 24. 1654.

(My Lord, and Gentlemen,)

Your most zealously affectionate well-wisher, and (upon that account) servant in the Gospel,

SIMON FORD.

A SERMON

Preached at the *Assises* holden for the County of *Berks* at *Reading*, *Feb.* 28. 1653. Mr. *William Backhouse* of *Swallowfield*, SHERIFFE.

PSAL. 75. 4, 5, 6, 7.

I said (or rather, I will say) to the fools, deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, lift not up the horn, v. 4.

Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiffe neck, v. 5.

For promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South, v. 6.

But God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another, v. 7.

THis Psalm is a good Magistrates Directory, because it is the Copy of that Kings heart, who was a man after Gods own heart. *David*, at the time of the writing hereof, is by most sound Interpreters supposed to have been in that Morning-

Twilight of Royalty, a midling condition between a King and no King, which you have described, 2 *Sam.* 2, and 3 Chapters. *Ishbosheth* the son and heir of *Saul*, the late King, was yet strugling for ten parts in twelve of the whole Kingdome. 'Twas an hot dispute of two years continuance. But at last, *Davids* house grows stronger and stronger, and *Ishboshaths* weaker and weaker, *chap.* 3. 1. This day-star of approaching Royalty, being thus got above the Horizon, and fore-telling the nearness of the Sun to dispel the mists of his long doubts and fears, (it is supposed) sets *Davids* harp and heart in tune; and thereupon he takes occasion to testifie his thankfulness in this ἐπινίκιον ἐυχαριστικόν, or triumphant thankful Ode. His thankfulness is partly *Verbal*, in the acknowledgement of Gods faithfulness, in so near an issue of an expected mercy, (for this he means by the *nearness of Gods name*, v. 1.) and of his Soveraign Power and Justice, in the way wherein he accomplished it, *v.* 7, 8, 9. And partly *Real*, in the resolvedness of his heart, to repair the breaches and ruines of *Sauls* dissolute Government. The whole State, both *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, was like a *melted Vessel*, run into a lump of confusion and disorder, (for that is the Original emphasis of that phrase, *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved*, v. 3. And there was no hope that ever it would be a Vessel for honour or use any more, except a skilful Founder undertook to new-cast it. Such an one was *David*, and that he might give assurance of his undertaking, he before-hand declares the mould or model unto which he will reduce it.

מוג *Dissolutus liquefactus fuit.*

1. He

1. He will first cement the broken pieces of the old frames, *viz.* Religion, Law, and Justice, which are the pillars of all Government.

2. He will secure those pillars from the insolent petulancy of bold and presumptuous offenders, by a severe execution of the utmost severity and rigour of divine and humane Laws upon them. And both these he will do upon the consideration of his conscientious obligation thereunto; and that upon this account, because all his power is confessedly subordinate to Gods, which is the sum of my Text, and the following verse.

I will say (for so I read it with *Pareus* and *Mus culus*) *unto the fools, deal not so foolishly, &c.*

For promotion cometh, &c.

In which words you have two general parts:
1. *David's resolution* of reformation, *I will say, &c.*
2. The *reason* of that resolution *For promotion, &c.*

In the first of these you may further observe,

1. The subjects of it, *Fools*, (that is, bad men, but such whose sins are only prejudicial to themselves) & *wicked men*, such who by reason of long remissenes of Civil Government, during the unquiet & turbulent reign of *Saul*, were grown to a great height of presumption & violence, daring all Laws both divine & human out of countenance, which he expresseth by two phrases, speaking with a stiffe neck, and lifting up the horn, Metaphors taken from unbroken Colts, or wild Bulls, who are altogether impatient of the bridle or the yoke. Sons of *Belial* indeed, if the received Etymology of that word hold water. These are the persons that *David* intends to deal withal in this resolved reformation.

הוללים boasting fools; רשעים troublesome fools.

בלי־עול cui non est jugum.

2. The

2. The nature of it, and that is by way of restraint upon their unruly lusts: for this *saying* implies *doing*. *De meritâ vindictâ & coercione intelligendum est*, one sayes; *Cohibebo* (sayes another) *petulantes regni & ecclesiæ perturbatores*, *zealous and resolute Authority useth not to speak vain words*. This *saying* is like that *Psal.* 2. 5. where God is said to speak to such another generation of wild Beasts, but how? so, as to *vex them in his sore displeasure*. So here, *I will say to the fools*, &c. is as much, as I will by wholesome Laws, and a zealous execution of them, either amend their persons, or (at least) restrain their lusts. If they will *deal foolishly*, they shall not *deal so foolishly*, and if they will *wear horns* still, yet they shall not *lift the horn on high*.

Musculus.

2. The second general part may look two wayes:

1. Either as a *reason* prevailing with *David* thus to put forth his power to curb the insolencies of wicked men. *For promotion* (*i.e.* my promotion, by which I am advanced to the succession of *Sauls* Throne) *cometh*, &c.

2. Or as a *lesson* which he would by just severity teach them, who had sinned themselves into a near affinity to Atheism, by so long and uncontrolled a liberty of lust, and insolencies. *Just severity in Deputy gods may teach men so much Religion*, as, *that there is a God that judgeth the earth*. But I rather look upon it as a motive to *David* himself. And then the Argument runs thus: I was awhile since a poor Shepherds boy, and I am now advanced to the *potentia proxima* of an absolute Royalty. Therefore it concerns

me

me gratefully to acknowledge, and zealously to act for him that advanced me, and (*seeing promotion comes not from the East, &c. But God is the Judge, &c.*) I will answer his ends in my advancement.

This part hath two branches:

1. A *negation of power* in any *creature* to give, or take away honour and power. Though all assistance from all quarters of the world should concenter their endeavours for one mans exaltation, they could not do it, if God will pull him down; and *è contra*, Though the whole *posse* of the Creation, were raised to pull a man down, yet if God say nay, their endeavours shall be successeless.. *David* here takes his expressions from the Topography of the land of *Palestine*, and expresseth *East* and *West* distinctly, but includes *North* and *South*, both under the expression of *midbar*, *the Desart*, that Country being on both *North* and *South* sides bounded with waste lands of that denomination. Whence your *Margin* reads it *Desart*, and your English Meter, *forsaken wilderness*.

2. An *assertion of that power and prerogative in God alone. He is Judge*, i.e. absolute, and independent, insomuch that he is no way taxable, though he puts in and puts out, lifts up, and pulls down according to his own good pleasure; And yet proceeds in a way of regular justice in this case of male-administration. *As a Judge.*

Thus you see I have done this part of my task, *i. e.* taken to pieces this excellent watch, and shewed you the *wheels*, and the *spring*, *Davids reformation*, and the *impulsive cause* of it. But the harder

harder part of my busines is yet to come, *viz.* to put it together again, that you may take direction from its hand in the busines of so solemn a convention, as is that which hath brought you hither this day.

I know the *spring-wheel* should first be taken in hand, as the foundation must be laid before the building, in an exact order of nature. But the order I shall proceed by is Theological, and therefore I shall first begin with the Balance, *Davids* resolution of a just reformation, and then annex the reason at the last, to set it a going.

And first and foremost we will consider,

The subjects of this reformation. I said unto the *fools*, and to the *wicked*. Such then *David* found, even among the great ones, when he came to the Kingdom; he found beasts, and those armed with power, horned beasts: And such there will be every where, let the Laws be but a while silenced, and the Magistrate, either sleep, or connive, or both. Observe,

Evils not suppressed, will be spreading Evils. The case of such a *Common-wealth* will quickly be like the *field of the sluggard*, described *Prov.* 24. 31. *all grown over with thorns, and nettles will cover the face thereof*, (for ill weeds grow apace) *and the wall* of order and discipline will quite be *broken down*. There had need be diligent weeders to keep the field of a Common-wealth from being overspread. They had need be good hedges, that must keep in such unruly beasts, as my Text speaks of. *Qui non prohibet peccare, cùm possit, jubet.* If there be none to *forbid* the *fools* to *deal foolishly*, there need be none to *bid* them do so; he bids

bids them, that, when he can, doth not forbid them. Men (in a ſpiritual ſenſe) are all *naturall fools, folly is bound up in the heart of a child, Prov.* 22. and they need not be *taught* that *trade*; if they be but permitted to *ſet up* for themſelves, he had need be a wiſer man then ordinary that ſhall keep them within any bounds of reaſon or conſcience; for, obſerve again,

Wickedneſs tolerated will grow inſolent. Such fools, if the rod of correction do not diſcipline them, will know no difference, between ſimple folly and down-right madneſs. The *Aſſes eare* will turn his *ears* into *horns*, and grow *horn-mad*, and puſh againſt all thoſe that ſhall endeavour to bring him under the yoke. *Sin* and *Errour loſe nothing by indulgence.* If a logge be King, the frogs will quickly be preſumptuouſly petulant, and inſult over its ſluggiſhneſſe. A Magiſtrate *couchant* will quickly make offenders *rampant.* We uſe to ſay, when an horſe runs away with a young rider, *he knows who is upon the back of him.* The weakneſs or unskilfulneſs of the hand that manageth him, is a provocation to him to attempt the caſting off his burthen. There is nothing which is more intolerable *then a ſervant when he reigns*, if *Solomon* may be believed, *Prov.* 30. 22. When thoſe baſe luſts of men that under reſtraint ſeemed very ſubmiſs, are once let at liberty, they will rage the more intolerably; and much, out of anger they have been bridled.

Two things there were in *Sauls* Government, and the interval of *Davids*, that expoſed the Land to theſe wild beaſts, and their inſolencies, which among the reſt of the cauſes are (like *Saul* him-

himself, among the people) higher by the shoulders.

1. *A perpetual Militia.* Wars, Forain and Civil, defensive and offensive. And those (though never so necessary) like ill Physick, breed more ill humors, then they purge out. All Civil Authority must be silent, while the ratling of Arms drowns their voice; and the *sword of the Law* must submit to the *Law of the sword.* Thence the Souldiers in *Plutarch* wondered that any one should *read Law* to them that *wrot it* by their side, οὐ παύσεσθε ἡμῖν ὑπεζωσμένοις ξίφη, νόμους ἀναγινώσκοντες; War (in a sort) necessitates irregularities, not only against Civil, but even Military Laws. Martial Law, saith one, is as great a Solœcisme, as Martial peace.

Plut. in Pompeio.

Modern Policy.

Thence, when God threatneth war to his people, he tells them, that Military Insolency shall cast contempt upon Civil Magistracy, *they shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheeke,* Micah 5. 1. And when he cals for that Judgment upon a people, he is said to invite the *beasts of the field to devour,* Isa. 56. 9. There is a kind of *customary ferity* bred in the minds of men, by constant and familiar converse with instruments of death and violence, which will not easily be charmed into a peaceable submission to civil restraints, though the most discreet Magistrate *charm never so wisely.* Far be it from me, to asperse the persons of any of that profession among us. I can truly say of divers of them, what *Tertullus* said flatteringly, concerning *Felix* the Governour of *Judaa, by them we enjoy great quietness,* which we cannot but *accept alwayes, and in all places with*

much

much thankfulneſs, *Act.* 24. 2, 3. But I ſpeak of the influences of that profeſſion upon the generality of thoſe that profeſſe it, and the people living under the exerciſe of it. *Militaribus animis*, (ſays *Saluſt*) *adhibenda fomenta ut pacem ferre velint.* I dare ſay, your Lordſhips experience can teſtifie, that moſt of thoſe that make a trade of the highway, are the reliques of routed and disbanded Forces, (who like the unjuſt Steward) *cannot dig, and to beg are aſhamed*, and therefore follow that trade.

2. *The maintaining of a faction oppoſite to the faithful Prophets and Prieſts of the Lord.* *Samuel* for many years before *Sauls* death was laid aſide, as a man of too rigid a ſpirit for *Saul's* deſigns; and *Abimelech* and the Prieſts were looked upon as confederate with *David*, and upon the information of a treacherous *Doeg*, murthered upon ſuſpicion thereof. And no wonder, if they that are grown ſo bold, as to trample upon the Embaſſadours of God, make as bold with the Laws and Ordinances of man. I am ſure, in Gods juſt judgment, *Civil confuſions* have uſed to accompany *Church confuſions*; when *Judah* in *Abijahs* time was *without a teaching Prieſt*, they were alſo without *peace*, they went in and out of their own houſes with hazard of their lives, 2 *Chron.* 15. 3. I am glad, we of this Nation are at laſt grown ſo wiſe as to ſee that *Church-Levelling* needs nothing but a power to its will to introduce *State-Levelling* too; and that the *Honourable Robes* of Magiſtracy and Law are at the barre of many mens ignorant and ſottiſh fury, no leſs guilty of Antichriſtianiſm, then the *contemptible black coats*

of

of the Ministry of the Gospel. Assure your selves, My Lord, and you of the worshipful Bench, that 'tis only the awe of Conscience that subdues the fury, and rage of mens lusts; your Provisions of Law are a *lower bank*, which these violent wayes will quickly break over, when once they swell above those sacred *main banks* of Religious Principles and Institutions. *Let Magistrates maintain Gods Ordinances, God will theirs.*

In this case *David* found the Kingdom, a kind of wilderness of wild beasts. And therefore we need not wonder at his *resolution* of a severe reformation, of setting the nets and toils of good Laws to take them, (my next head which now comes to hand.)

I will say unto the fools, &c. Observe,

Insolent offenders must be curbed with a resolute severity. All diseases (say Physitians of greatest note) are cured by contraries. And (by consequence) the diseases of the body Politick occasioned by remissness, require more rough and churlish Physick to remove them. *Ne corporis quidem morbos, veteres, & diu auctos nisi per dura & aspera coercetas: corruptus, & corrumpens, æger & flagrans animus haud levioribus remediis restinguendus est quàm libidinibus ardescit,* sayes *Tacitus.* Stiffe-necked Colts will not be managed with a slack rein. Let *David* come to the Throne with never so much resolution, yet he will find enough to do when he comes to act that resolution. He will find cause to complain that the sons of *Zeruiah are too strong for him*, 2 *Sam.* 3. 39. Wherefore he is fain to die in their debt, and to leave it upon his son *Solomon* to discharge, 1 *Kings* 2. 5. And when he goes

out

out of the world his laſt words back his firſt reſolution, 2 *Sam.* 23. 6, 7. *But the ſons of* Belial, &c.

In ſuch caſes, a Magiſtrate had need to ſharpen the *ſword* of Juſtice with the *file* of reſolution; *Fiat juſtitia, ruat cœlum.* Come what will, or can come, he muſt be armed againſt it with a fixed purpoſe of getting the enemies ground, or dying upon his own: of gaining the horſe, or loſing the ſaddle, *ſawing* off the *horns* of theſe wilde beaſts, or being *gored* by them. He muſt reſolve to be the *Champion* of Juſtice whiles he can, and when he can no longer be ſo, he muſt become her Martyr.

A Judges *heart* and his *robes* muſt be both *dyed in grain*, elſe the *colour* of the one, and the *courage* of the other will quickly fade. Good Miniſters ſhould have the Motto of *Aarons* Miter written upon their fore-heads, *Holineſs to the Lord*; and Magiſtrates ſhould have written upon their hearts, what *Moſes* had on his, *Reſolution for the Lord.* This alone will fortifie a man againſt all mollifying conſiderations. Thus the Sons of *Levi* came armed to execute the vengeance of the Lord againſt Idolaters, *Deut.* 33. 9. compared with *Exod.* 32. 26, 27, 28. But *when* doth *David* reſolve to put theſe reſolves in execution? Even as ſoon as the reins of government are put into his hand. As ſoon as he receives the *Congregation*, *v.* 2. And leſt we ſhould think this was the iſſue of ſome haſty thoughts, which upon better advice he would ſee cauſe not to ſtand to; you ſhall hear him back it in another Pſalm, *I will early deſtroy all the wicked of the Land*; Pſa. 101. *ult.* Obſerve, (from the time)

That *Magistrates reforming resolutions must be speedily and effectually prosecuted.* For,

1. Good resolutions will cool again, when they are off from the fire of a present good mood, if they be not speedily put in execution.

2. Delays in this case are dangerous; when the fire once gets to the house top, the least delay will quickly render it unquenchable. If a small Army be suffered to entrench, and victual *themselves*, a great strength will have enough to do to conquer them.

If the Sea break in upon a Land, it may be at the first a little labour will repair the bank; but if it be neglected but a few dayes, all the Country cannot turn it out again.

Novi ego quod primo fuerat medicabile vulnus.
Neglectum longæ damna tulisse moræ.

2 Tim. 2. 17. Wickedness will spread *as a Gangrene*, (and especially that which the Apostle speaks of in that place, Heresie) and toleration makes it incurable.

3. Opportunities and seasons of doing good, are not in our hands, but Gods. This is the ground of that advice of *Mordecai* to *Hester*, *Who knoweth but that thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?* Hester 4. 13.

And this leads me to the second general part of my Text, *the ground of* Davids *resolution*, [*For promotion cometh neither from the East*, &c.]

Which words are an *universal negation* of creature-power in the managery of State-affaires, further then Gods Providence co-operates with it. *Men are apt to expect advancement from second causes.* *Politicians* use to have their Engines at work in all Quarters. Such correspondencies in the

the *East*, and such in the *West*, &c. And they are apt to conclude, if but such or such a designtake (one of many) that makes for their advantage. And when their plots are spoiled in one part, yet they maintain hope from another quarter of the world. And indeed, *This is the spring of all manner of irregular compliances*, with those from whom we expect furtherance in our designs, that we look upon them, as our advancers. Thence (saith *Solomon*) *many seek the Rulers favour*, *Prov.* 29. 26. and that with sordid and horrid encroachments upon the principles of ingenuity and conscience, licking up the very spittle of great ones, (as is reported of *Dyonisius* his flatterers) and conforming to their very vices and imperfections, as is reported of *Alexanders* courtiers, that imitated his wry neck.

And in the last Kings reign, in the encroachments upon the publique liberty by Ship-money and Monopolies, His Judges, (all but one or two that went with honour to their graves) perswaded him 'twas Law, and his Divines 'twas Conscience. As if they had both been of the mind of *Cambyses* his Councellors, who advising with them in a case of incestuous marriage, they told him all the Statute Law of the Land was against him; but there was another Law, that the King might do what he would.

Now *the ready way to keep men from irregular courses for advancement, is to perswade them*, (O that God would do it) *that vain is the help of man. Trust not in Princes, nor in the son of man*, (saith *David*) *in whom there is no help*, *Psal.* 146. 3.

And, *Cursed be he that maketh flesh his arm, and*

whose heart departeth from the Lord. Creature-confidence is the mother of Apostasie, and defeatment, *Jer.* 17.5,6.

But where then is the *spring of preferment?* And from what Fountain doth it flow? The last part of my Text tells you, *God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* Of which in a few words, and then I shall dismiss you with a word or two by way of application to the present occasion. Observe hence,

All the Translations of Civil power in the world, are the effects of a Divine, *and that, a just Providence.* God works these changes, and that as a *Judge*, in a judicial way.

There is nothing in the world of more common *observation*, and less solemn and sanctified *meditation*, then the various turnings of the wheel of Providence. One while, a *David* taken from the Sheep-coat, from *following the Ewes great with young*, and advanced (in *Homers* phrase) εἰς ποιμένα λαῶν, to be a *Shepherd of men*, his Sheep-hook changed into a Scepter, and his seat of turf to a Royal throne. A *Joseph* from an imprisoned slave, to a Royal Favorite. A *Gideon*, from a threshing floor, raised to be a Saviour of *Israel*, and his *threshing instrument of wood*, changed into one of *iron, to thresh the mountains*, as God himself phraseth it. *Hester* a poor captive maid, advanced to a royal bed, *Hest.* 2. 6,17. And in prophane stories, a Dictator from the Plough, and an Emperour from the hog-trough, a third from keeping the Cowes, &c. And our *Hen.* the 8. took his two great favourites, the one from the Slaughter-house, and the other from the Forge.

Psal. 78. 71.

Jud. 6. 11

Isa. 41. 15.

On

On the other side, *Adonibezek* a mighty Prince, made Fellow-Commoner with the Dogs; and *Nebuchadnezzar*, a mightly Conquerour, and one that lifted his horn to a great height, turned a grazing with the Oxen; and *Herod* in his most sumptuous apparel, and amidst the shouts and acclamations of his people, reduced from a conceited God, to be the most loathsome of men; a living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures, upon the suit of his affronted Creator. A great *Haman* feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crowes the next, *Hest.* 7. 10. Jud. 1. 7. Dan. 4. 28. Acts 12. 23.

And in humane stories, who knows not that one of the greatest Commanders in the world, was carried about in an Iron-grate, to be a foot-stool to an insulting Conquerour? That *Belisarius* the famousest General that the later Age of the Roman Empire knew, and in greatest favour with *Justinian* his Prince, was reduced to that want, that he was fain to beg for his living, *Date obolum Belisario.* This is commonly the lot of great Favourites, *Fatum potentiæ rarò sempiternæ*, (sayes *Tacitus*) *quippe satias capit aut illos cùm omnia tribuerunt, aut hos cùm nihil reliquum est quod cupiant.* The common fate of worldly preferment, that is seldome lasts, Princes being either cloy'd with giving their favors, or subjects with receiving them, when they have no more to give, nor these to receive. *Bajazet.*

And in our dayes, these changes and revolutions of the wheel of Providence have been ordinary.

We have seen in one *Royal Family*, (and that one of the most eminent in these parts of the

world) a great and puissant Monarch, in the face of the Sun, at noon-day, at the gate of his own Palace, in the most populous City of these three Nations, in the midst of thousands of his passionate well-wishers, and zealous partizans, laying his head upon a fatal block; three Queens of his line and alliance, reduced to the Contribution of Foraigners, for a mean subsistence; and a numerous issue of the same family, crushed under the same wheel of Providence, in whom not many years since these Nations rejoyced, as the budding hopes of an uninterrupted succession.

We have seen a *Parliament*, the darling of the people, sitting under the protection of a perpetual Act, crumbled into pieces, and at last wholly dissolved with the *crucifige* of that very people, that a few years since cryed *Hosanna*, and prostrated their very hearts at their feet, to pave them a triumphant entrance into that trust they had elected them unto.

We have seen a formidable *Meteor of Policy* lately elevated to a great height of confidence and presumption, *lifting up the horn on high*, or (as a Learned *Jew* reads the words) *against the high God*, and *speaking with a stiff neck*, caught like *Abrahams* Ram, *by the horns in a bush*, and made a just sacrifice to the scorn and contempt of all men; and their *Arm withered* in the very act, for stretching them out against the Prophets of the Lord.

R. Immanuel.

In a word, such changes of publique affairs, as if the starres, or those that pretend to great familiarity with them, had been but ordinary Prophets, they could not have overseen, without an in-

inexcusable neglect. Such wonderful, and momentous Providences as all *Europe* is concerned in, should not in my judgement have been omitted among our Calculators, (who are at leisure to take abundant notice of (that farre more inconsiderable thing) *the Clergy*) except possibly they calculated the Common-wealths Nativity upon black Munday, when they had not light enough to erect their Scheme. However at the present, let them passe with this *memento*, that *it is not for vain man, to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath kept in his own power*; and that undoubtedly, God Almighty is better able to keep his own counsel, then to acquaint the Starres with such affairs, or at least their Secretaries, who make a livelihood of blabbing all that they know, and more too. But (to leave this digression.)

* The day of the great Eclipse 1652. concerning which our Stargazers prognosticated such monstrous darkness but were confuted by the event. Acts 1.

This is that great Truth, which Scripture so much inculcates upon men, that (it seems) are very slow of heart to beleeve it. How often doth God tell us this truth, in various forms of expressions? *That he raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy from the dunghil, that he may set him with Princes*, Psal. 113.7. *That he poureth contempt upon Princes, and maketh them to wander in the wildernesse*, whiles (on the other side) he *setteth the poor on high*, Psal. 107. 41, 42. that he *raiseth the beggar from the dunghill, and maketh him to inherit the Crown of glory*, because the *pillars of the earth are his*, 1 Sam. 2. 7, 8. that he *cuts off the spirit of Princes, and is terrible to all the Kings of the earth*, Psal. 76. 12.

Insomuch, that it seems wonderful to me,

that (after so much clear conviction, both from Scripture and experience) the lustre of present greatness should usually so blinde the eyes of great ones, and flatter them with a perswasion of immunity from these changes, as it doth. That their *inward thought* should still be, (that which this Psalmist notes, as a great folly, *That their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations*, Psal. 49. 11. That they conceit their *mountain* to be so *strong, that they shall never be moved*, Psal. 30. 6 7.

That when men cast about all manner of ways for advancement, they should not so much as think of God; nay, that they should entertain an Atheistical conceit, that a conscientious walking with God, is the only way to spoil their preferment. (As if indeed that which *Balak* told *Balaam*, who was a little too nice for his design, were true, that the *Lord keeps men from honour.*) That he that wil be great, must have a conscience as large as his designs, lest being too straight-laced, it cause miscarriage. That *seeming* good should be accounted a more ready road to greatness, then *being* so. Surely, did men believe God to be the Soveraign Disposer of all preferments, they would in reason be able to conclude, that he would advance his own servants rather then others, if advancement be good for them. But because men do not cordially believe this Truth, therefore they neglect him, and prostitute their consciences to the base lusts of others. Insomuch that a man would think, when he reads the stories of some great Politicians lives, that the Devil and they had struck a bargain upon the

Num. 24. 11.

terms,

terms which our Saviour refuſed. *Luke* 4. 6. *All this power will I give thee, and the glory of theſe Kingdoms, for that is delivered to me, and to whomſoever I will, I give it. If therefore thou wilt worſhip me, all ſhall be thine.* Or, that they had been bred with that great French Courtier, that choſe a part in *Paris*, before a part in *Paradiſe*. Or, Laſtly, that they had learned thoſe Heathen Politicks of

Flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos Acheronta movebo; *Virg.*

And,

Varo, reguſtatum digito terebrare ſalinum *Perſ.*
Contentus perages, ſi vivere cum Jove tendis.

How much better were it for men to keep *Gods high way* to greatneſs, which though it may ſeem the *farther way about* to them that are in haſte, yet (conſidering, that *he that maketh haſte to be rich cannot be innocent*, as *Solomon* ſayes, *Prov.* 28. 20. and that they that purchaſe the *whole world* with the loſſe of their *own ſouls*, get nothing, when a dying conſcience caſts up their accounts, *Matth.* 16. 26.) it is the nearer way by farre; Eſpecially when we have Gods ſolemn engagement for it, that *thoſe that honour him, he will honour, and they that deſpiſe him ſhall be ſleightly eſteemed*, 1 Sam. 2. 30.

Laſtly, (conſidering this great Truth) I cannot but wonder at the ſpirit that thoſe men are of, who in ſuch changes, as fall out againſt the grain of their expectations, carry themſelves, rather like Atheiſts then Chriſtians under them.

1. Sometimes in a pet at God himſelf, throwing off that maſk of Religion, which they had hoped might have advantaged them; and becauſe this

this *evil is from the Lord*, they are resolved to *wait upon him no longer*, like that wicked Prince, who is branded upon record for that ungodly resolution, 2 *Kings* 6. 33. How many have all Ages of the Church known, who because they could not obtain their designed greatness, by profession of Orthodoxy and Piety, have attempted to recover it by Apostacy and Persecution?

2. And sometimes in a furious and Diabolical rage, fuming and foaming against the Instruments causing or occasioning them. How familiar a thing hath it been with our deboist gallantry in these late years, to drink healths to the confusion of this party, and that party, to curse, and devote to the Devil such and such men, as the Authors or Promoters of those events, they storm at?

Not considering, that (as we say) *the Fox never fares better then when he is cursed*: nor, that the worst of men, in the worst actions, do but Midwife Gods secret intendments, that the crucifying of the *Lord of glory*, was indeed the *pre-determined counsel of God*, *Act.* 4. 28. though the sin of that wicked act were the guilt of those that acted therein: nor that their own sins impower those instruments, that thus thwart their designs; and that when God makes such changes, he doth it *as a Judge*, for the just punishment of those whom he afflicts thereby. Which opens a door to the last branch of this last part of the Text,

God is the Judge.

Whence observe,

The greatest changes in the world are judicial acts of Gods Providence. Not meer *acts of Soveraignty*, in which

which God acts by Prerogative, although it be his Prerogative ſometimes ſo to act. Whence (although God uſe arguments from this Prerogative, to ſilence our cavils, in thoſe great differences which he makes between one man and another; eſpecially in relation to ſalvation and damnation, wherein the Apoſtles anſwer hath hitherto among ſerious and ſolid Chriſtians, been judged ſatisfactory. *Hath not the Potter power over the clay*, &c. *Rom.* 9. 12. Nay, and even in State-changes, he makes uſe of the ſame ſimilitude. *Jer.* 16. 8. Yet,) he hath a rule of juſtice which he commonly walks by; not only that *ſecret will* of his which makes things juſt, becauſe he wills them; but alſo that *revealed Law of righteouſneſs*, which he hath laid down in his Word. So that it may be truly ſaid, (as to us and our demerits) that no man loſeth honour or eſtate, but he that firſt forfeits it. If God caſt out the *Canaanites*, & bring *Iſrael* in to tread upon the necks of their Kings, it is when *their iniquities are full*; and if God reject *Saul*, it is becauſe he rejects God firſt; and if he make the ſons of *Eli* vile, it is becauſe they *made themſelves vile*, and made his *ſacrifice to be abhorred*. And even *Job* himſelf (though he were a ſingular example, and his abaſement was rather a deſign to do him good, then a puniſhment for any notorious evil, yet) dares not plead his own innocency, except in the particulars which his friends charged him withal, injuſtice and hypocriſie, *Job* 9. 14, 15.

Gen. 15. 16. 1 Sam. 15. 26. 1 Sam. 3. 13.

But the cauſes of ſuch Judgements are not always diſcernable to others, no, nor (it may be) to the men themſelves, that are the ſubjects of them, (though

(though godly,) and therefore (even as *Job* himself) it was good counsel that he should say to the Lord, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me* Job 10. 2. and, *If I have done iniquity, I will do so no more*, Job 34. 31, 32.

Sometimes, they are the sins of the first Founders of a Family that entail forfeitures upon their posterity: As in the case of *Jehu*, who doing Gods work with a spirit of private revenge, cuts off the succession from his line after four generations, 2 *Kings* 10. 30. *Hos.* 1. 4.

And in the case of *Ishbosheth*, whose Title to the Crown of *Israel Saul* forfeited, it may be before he was born, at least before he possessed it.

Sometimes the sins of an immediate parent, and he godly too, as in the case of *Eli* and his posterity, may entail an affliction. So in the case
1 Kings 11. 31. of *Solomon* and his posterity, the Kings of *Judah*. *Reboboam* lost ten Tribes for his Fathers sinne.

Sometimes it is for the sins of the people upon whom such changes have an influence. As when God saith in *Hos.* 13. 11. *I have given them Kings in mine anger, and have taken them away in my wrath.* See also *Isa.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And (in my judgement) this very consideration should move all persons under any employment, to lay out their utmost interests and abilities for God. The Wheel of Providence is perpetually turning, the higheſt spokes will quickly be lower. He that put down some for male-administration, will (as he can) put down you, if you administer the affairs you are intrusted with all as they did. Sure-

Surely *David* had often ſuch thoughts. If *Saul* were caſt off, becauſe he ſpared where God bade him ſtrike, becauſe he permitted wickedneſs to range unbridled over the Nation, and to liſt up the horn on high, God will lay me aſide too, if I follow his ſteps. Therefore *I will ſay*, &c.

It is that that concerns moſt of us ſeriouſly to conſider.

As for the *Miniſtry*, God hath poured contempt upon them in an abundant meaſure; and truly, conſidering what a company of ignorant, ſordid, ſottiſh, lazy, Popiſh fellows, walk up and down in the garb of that profeſſion, I wonder that errour, and ſacriledge, have proceeded no farther againſt them, then they have. Can any expect, but God ſhould forſake his Sanctuary, when the Prieſts make his ſacrifices to be abhorred?

For my part, I am as zealous for the Calling and Maintenance of the Miniſtery of *England*, as any that hears me can be. But I deſire thoſe of my brethren here preſent this day, to be perſwaded, that whatever contempt hath been or may be poured upon that reverend Calling, ſome of their owne profeſſion have occaſionally been guilty of.

And, as for the *Gentry*, I beleeve there is ſcarce a Noble Family in the whole Nation at this time, but God hath during theſe laſt troubles, brought under ſome diſparagement, or diminution, or both.

For my part, I can ſay from my heart, that I have not a levelling ſpirit, and I think it a ſad Judgement to a people, when *they that were*

brought

brought up in ſcarlet imbrace dungbils; Lam. 4. 5. God preſerve civil diſtinctions in *England*.

But, O that God would give them hearts to conſider the juſtice of his proceedings, in the ſeverity of his dealing with them, and to examine themſelves concerning the cauſe of it. Shall I help you a little to finde it out? Look upon the *great Charter*, the *Scripture-Patent*, by which (as to God) all men hold their honours, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. Have you not diſhonoured God the more, for the power he hath given you above others? God hath brought Nobility and Gentry low in *England*, and if they walk in the ſinnes of their Families, which commonly have been, and yet are in moſt places, (a few only excepted) *pride, wantonneſſe, drunkenneſſe, ſwearing, gaming, and all manner of debauchery; oppreſſing their poor neighbors, and Tenants, Simoniacal and Sacrilegious encroachment upon Church-maintenance, joyned with contempt of God, his Miniſters, and Ordinances*, let them be aſſured God will bring them lower; he will reverſe their Eſchucheons, breake their ſwords, and cut off their ſpurres, and bring ſuch a rot into their families, that their dwelling places ſhall know them no more.

Your hearts are ready to ſay (I know) as they did, when Chriſt told them God would *take away his Vineyard from them, and let it out to other husbandmen*. God forbid. And for my part, I heartily joyn with you in that prayer, ſo Gods Honour and his Truth may be ſaved; otherwiſe, let all the Titles in the world go for me. Better the *pride* of mans *glory* ſhould be *ſtained*, then God any way diſparaged. For a remedy of theſe

Luk. 20. 16.

evils,

evils, I beseech you, (Sirs) let my counsel be accepted of you. For Gods sake, and your own, and your posterities sake, *Get the true knowledge and the fear of God into your Families; do not maintaine a company of Ruffians, Drunkards, Swearers, and unclean wretches, in your Livery; use them to Reading, Prayer, Repetition of Sermons, those contemned exercises of true and real godlinesse; ride abroad, and encourage honest Lectures, and bring your Tenants in by your example, who seldome goe to Heaven or Hell, but as their Landlords lead them. Get Bibles and Catechismes, and Books of Practical Divinity, as* Perkins, Preston, Reynolds, Sibs, Bolton, Greenham, &c. *into your houses, in stead of Cards and Dice, and Tables; restore* (if it be to be known) *what sacrilegious bits any of your Ancestours have devoured; give more to a godly Minister to maintain him, then to a drunken Huntsman or Falconer; let not the Gospel be cheaper to you then your pleasures. Think not less Religion will carry a Gentleman to Heaven, then a poore labourer. Nay, I tell you he had need of more, if Christ may be believed*, Mat. 19.24.

If I am plainer with you then you desire, I pray forgive me this wrong, seeing I do it for your good.

My Apology for it is that of *Salust*, when he hadripte open the vices of his times, *Bonum nulla oratio laedere potest; quippe vera, necesse est bene praedicet, falsam illius vita moresque facile superant.* *Salust. Bell. Jugurth.*

And now the Publique solemnity of this dayes meeting, calls for some particular addresses to those for whose sake I was called hither. And they shall be very brief, because I am loath to be your hinderance from your publick businesses.

And

Judge *Atkins*:

And first of all, my busineſſe is to you, *My Lord*, concerning whom, though I am a ſtranger to your face and acquaintance, yet the reputation you have among good men, where you are moſt known, emboldens me to ſay as the Apoſtle *Paul* in another caſe concerning the *Corinthians*, that *your forwardneſſe of minde* is ſuch, that it is *ſomething ſuperfluous* for me to exhort you: and let me adde (from him alſo) thus much, that I hope you will *ſhew the proofe of your love* to Religion and Juſtice, and of our *boaſting on your behalfe*. Onely I beſeech you to give me leave faithfully to repreſent to you the ſtate of the County you have now to doe withall, that ſo your *forward minde* may have ſufficient matter to worke upon.

2 Cor. 9. 1.

2 Cor. 8. ult.

And firſt of all, (*my Lord*) as *to Religion*, I know not what we are; I am ſure very few of us are what we ſhould bee. But for this little Town, where your preſent imployment lies: I ſpeake my thoughts freely, without ſpleen, or paſſion, that I verily perſwade my ſelfe, if all *Auguſtines*, and *Epiphanius*'s Catalogues of Hereſies were loſt, and all other ancient and moderne Records in that kinde, yet it were no hard matter to reſtore them with conſiderable enlargements from hence. We have Anabaptiſme, Familiſme, Socinianiſme, Pelagianiſme, Raunting, (and what not?) and the Devil is ſerved in Heterodoxe Aſſemblies as frequently as God in ours. *There is one of the moſt eminent Church-Livings in this County poſſeſſed by a blaſphemer; and one in whoſe houſe, I beleeve ſome here can teſtifie, the Devil is viſibly as familiar, as any one of the family. And ſhall

* Concerning whom there will ere long be a publique account given upon the evidence of ſundry Oaths, as to both parts of this Charge, and that in print by a faithfull hand.

the

the *horns* of theſe beaſts never be pared off by the Civill Magiſtrate? My Lord, I beſeech you act, (I know you will) to the uttermoſt of your power to reſtraine theſe unruly beaſts, and where you want power, repreſent that want to thoſe that can beſtow it: and I hope by this time they ſee need enough to do ſo themſelves.

As for Civill Affaires, we have (bleſſed bee God) ſome among us, that would be zealous and faithfull in the Offices they are intruſted withal, if they might be borne out in ſo doing. Wee had the laſt yeare a few active Officers, and no leſſe then three or foure vexatious ſuits, and ſome of them (it may be) may come before your Lordſhip this Aſſiſes, commenced againſt them by notorious offenders, for pretended irregularity in ſome circumſtances.

My Lord, you have one ſuite before you (at the leaſt) from the iſſue whereof the whole County will collect whether they may dare to doe Juſtice, or no. Surely, if Humane Law-givers bee like the Divine, no man ſhould bee punished for too much zeale in the execution of the Law.

My Lord, Drunkenneſſe is growne more impudent among us, then it was in Saint *Pauls* time. And our Officers dare not meddle with a *Gentleman Drunkard*, for feare of an Action of Battery. 1 Theſſ. 5. 7.

And for Sabbath-breakers; would God we had Magiſtrates among us of *Nehemiahs* temper, that would *contend with them*, & *lay hands* upon them too. I am in hope, a word from your Lordſhip would doe much towards the execution of thoſe Neh. 13. 11, 17, 25

Acts and Ordinances that concern that busineſſe. Here be inſolent Robbers about the Countrey, almoſt every where; ſcarce a Gentlemans, or other able mans houſe round about this Town, but hath been aſſaulted, or threatned at leaſt, and ('tis ſaid) there is a *Corporation* of them. I hope Juſtice will make ſome of them free of the *Hang-mans Corporation*, for a terror to others.

As for you *Gentlemen*, that are of the *Commiſſion of the peace*, I doe ſomewhat pleaſe my ſelfe, that I can now call the moſt of you confidently by that name. We were like to have had (not long ſince) a *Linſey-wolſey Heterogeneous Bench*, ſuch as the *Medley-Conſtitution* of thoſe times would allow. And indeed it was not to be expected, but that thoſe that endeavoured the extirpation of the *Miniſtery* to ſet up *Jeroboams Prieſts*, ſhould diſcard the *Gentry*, and fill their ſeats with *John of Leydens Dukes*, both of the ſame ſtuffe, the *meaneſt of the people*.

(Though I would not hereby diſparage thoſe whoſe knowne worth makes them eſteemed in the Countrey, who have the thing which firſt gave Nobility; and are as fit to begin a line of Honour to be continued to their poſterity, as thoſe from whom our preſent Gentry deſcend. But I conceive, that ſuch mixtures, except very ſparingly made, and that upon weighty conſiderations, much prejudice the eſteeme of Authority to the people.)

I beſeech you, honoured Sirs, do not think it enough to appere upon the Bench at Aſſizes and general Seſſions but appoint frequent, and ſtanding

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ing Privy Seſſions, to rectifie publique diſorders in the Countrey upon the place, to put downe *Ale-houſes, the Devils Univerſities*, where men proceed Graduates in all manner of wickedneſſe; to ſuppreſſe Drunkenneſſe, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking: and when inferiour Officers preſent ſuch offenders before you, doe not tell them by your ſleight entertainment of them, that you are of *Gallio's* minde, and *care for none of thoſe things*.

I have heard ſome Officers complaine of late, that they are diſcouraged in that part of their office: they are zealous in taking hold of ſuch offenders, and when they come to the Juſtice he releaſeth them. He that (having your power) does not cut off theſe offenders *horns* wears them, yea, and will puſh with them alſo in time. I never knew any Magiſtrate indulging any ſin, but either he was guilty of it himſelfe, or more then ordinarily inclined to it, had he ſutable opportunity.

And you *Grand Inqueſt-men*, I am ſomewhat ignorant of your particular Function, but I conceive one main part of your buſineſſe is, to make preſentment of thoſe grievances, wherein the Countrey whom you repreſent, needs redreſſe. And I hope you will not forget two things, which I thinke to be of great concernment, the one is, *want of Church-Government*, without which, Civill Government cannot be long preſerved in a Chriſtian Common-wealth. Church-levelling, and State-levelling, are twins; onely (like *Jacob* and *Eſau*) the one rough and hairy, and not ſo apt to be dandled and made much of by the Magiſtrate, who uſually is tender in ſuch

things as concern publique peace; but the other a more sweet babe, which under the notion of tenderneſſe of Conſcience, and Chriſtian Liberty, hath been the fondling of former Governours, untill it had almoſt proved a *Jacob*, a *Supplanter* indeed, by exchanging the *voice of Jacob*, for the *hands of Eſau*.

The other is, *Liberty of Prophecying*, through the indulgence of former Powers, grown to ſuch an height, that every whipping-boy, when he he hath gotten an Heretical notion or two by the end, hath impudence enough to intrude into any Pulpit to vent it; or elſe to draw aſide poor ſilly ſouls into corners, and infect them there without controll. And ſome of them though they uſurpe the *place of the Cleargy*, yet if they ſhould fall into your hands, would not be capable of the *priviledge of the Clergy*, and hang for not being able to read.

Friends, for Gods ſeke, for the Goſpels ſake, for your poor ſouls ſake, for your near relations ſake, ſome of whom are in perpetuall danger of being poiſoned, till your ſuperiours, as the voice of all that love the welfare of *Jeruſalem* in the County, that *nothing is ſo intolerable, as a boundleſſe Toleration*.

You of *both Juries*, take heed to your Oaths and Conſciences, and remember that *he that condemneth the righteous, and he that acquitteth the wicked, are both an abomination to the Lord*. If any ſilly Cattel come before you, doe not gratifie a malicious proſecutor by ſaying their *eares* are *horns*, but where you finde *horns* indeed, and thoſe *lifted up*, and ſuch as have uſed to *puſh in time paſt*,

Prov. 17. 15.

past, you know the Law of God as well as man, allowes you to return such guilty.

I had almost forgotten you, *Gentlemen of the Gown*, and 'tis a wonder I should, when I spoke of *Levelling*. I honour your profession, and therefore I will presume to adventure a little good counsell to your acceptance, without any other *fee*, then the testimony of a good *Conscience*, in the discharge of my duty. You know that Law is the *Sanctuary* of a free subject; for Gods sake, do not you be guilty of turning it into an *Inquisition-house*, where poor mens cases are so long stretched out upon the *rack* of needlesse delayes, till both their purse-strings, and heert-strings crack. Surely, there is an evill report abroad concerning some of you, that you betray the *priviledges of this Sanctuary*; which makes many an honest man rather run all hazards, then flye thither for refuge. 'Its said, some of you are like indented Pictures, which if you look on them severall wayes, present you with severall faces in one Table; such as can take on both hands, of one to speak, and of another to hold their peace, or (as bad) to say nothing to the purpose. As Juries should not by verdict, so neither should Lawyers by pleading, turn *eares* into *horns*, and *horns* into *eares*, represent a man or cause otherwise then they are.

I know not to whom to recommend the care of the *Prison*, but to you all. I know it is the Sheriffes Prison, but I know not how farre his power extends in the things that I am to move in order to its reformation. At most, Sheriffs are

anuall,

annuall, and can take order but for their yeare; but you, my Lord, and the Bench, may reform for perpetuity.

For my part, I looke upon Goals, as they are usually furnished with Keepers, as Houses of *Infection, and loosenesse*, rather then houses (as they should be) of *correction and restraint*. I assure you, it hath sadded my soule to heare, when I have come in and out to see prisoners, the poore Felons in the Dungeon raunting and roaring, as if they were resolved to walk by the Epicures principles, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die*. And I feare scarce any one comes within those walls, but he is made *ten times more the child of the Devill then he was before*. O that you, my Lord, and the Bench, would take some course that those poore creatures that have not long to *live*, may be made fit to *die*, that they might be Catechized and Preached to. I heare there are places where the Prisons have a Preacher appointed and allowed upon the Sheriffes accounts. For God sake, my Lord, and Gentlemen, let something be done herein, that those you condemn to the *Gallows*, may not be sent to the *Devil* too.

1 Cor. 15 32.

Lastly, *you of the Countrey*, that have businesse with the Court, look to it, take heed of malice, perjury, and revenge. You that go to Law with one another, if for trifles, let fall your suits; the charges you put any one to in a vexatious suit, is so much money pickt out of his purse, and it may be so much necessary sustenance pluckt out of his poore wives and childrens bellies; if for matters of moment, and your cause be just, yet use

use mercy, charity, and moderation.

Lastly, let us all beseech the Lord, who is *the Judge of Judges*, as well as *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, that he will be with ours in the Judgement, that so (to close my Sermon, with the close of my Psalm) *All the horns of the wicked may be cut off, but the horns of the righteous may be exalted.*

FINIS.

grudge not the preacher, for he is thy judge.
If thou mislike him, thou conceivest him not.
God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge
To pick out treasures from an earthen not.
The worst speak something good: if all want
God takes a text & preacheth patience.